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President: Mr. Schulz (Vice-President) ..... (Germany)

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Closing of the segment

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Mr. Schulz (Germany), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 9: Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance (*continued*) (A/72/76-E/2017/58)

1. **The representative of the United States of America** said that his country continued to support the implementation of the Grand Bargain through the promotion of joint needs assessments and prioritized, comprehensive humanitarian appeals, more coherent programming between humanitarian and development assistance, improved field leadership and coordination, greater accountability and an enhanced role for local responders. The United States was strongly in favour of reduced management costs, multi-year planning and funding, reduced earmarking and the provision of cash assistance when appropriate.

2. The United States remained deeply concerned about the lack of protection for civilians in countries such as the Syrian Arab Republic, South Sudan and Yemen, and called on all parties to allow full, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to populations in need of assistance. Moreover, it was important to help humanitarian actors to operate in an independent and impartial manner.

3. Access constraints were the main driver of famine in South Sudan and were causing food insecurity in Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria. The United States was one of the largest donors of humanitarian assistance to those countries; additional support was needed from others in the international community.

4. Efforts were needed to elevate the issue of internal displacement within the United Nations and globally. After all, the overwhelming majority of displaced persons remained within their countries' borders. While the United States generally supported the adoption of the draft resolution on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (E/2017/L.24), it objected to the reference to technology transfer in paragraph 4 and opposed any language that undermined intellectual property rights. It should also be noted that, on 1 June 2017, the President of the United States had announced that the United States would withdraw from, or renegotiate its participation in, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

5. The value of the draft resolution would be diminished if its content stagnated or if it failed to address the most pressing issues on the ground. Indeed, the investment of the United States in future negotiations processes would depend on the extent to which the current and future resolutions would reflect such issues.

6. **The observer for Mexico** said that his country welcomed the Secretary-General's report on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/72/76-E/2017/58). Of the 26 recommendations made therein, 10 related to international humanitarian law, which parties to conflict persistently disregarded — an alarming trend. There was a need to respect international humanitarian law, facilitate dialogue, promote cooperation and adopt a human rights-based approach.

7. The World Humanitarian Summit had provided a forum for in-depth analysis of the humanitarian sector, and the Agenda for Humanity represented a crucial first step. Similarly, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants provided a historic opportunity to protect the security and dignity of persons crossing borders. In the Declaration, States had agreed to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and a global compact on refugees. All relevant actors should commit to collective efforts in that regard. Mexico, along with a number of Central American countries, was applying a comprehensive framework to address forced displacement issues in the region.

8. For Mexico, prevention was a priority. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 provided the international community with a powerful tool for avoiding human and material losses. At the fifth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which had taken place in May 2017 in Cancún, Mexico, participants had stressed the need to build resilience at all levels. The President of Mexico had chaired a

leaders' forum for disaster risk reduction, which had led to the adoption of a high-level communiqué containing a strategic commitment to ensuring the resilience of infrastructure and housing. In addition, he wished to recall that the Secretary-General had outlined his vision for a renewed focus on prevention in all its dimensions, including with regard to conflicts, human rights and financial matters.

9. **The representative of China** said that the international community should work together, forge consensus and adopt practical measures in response to the numerous, interconnected challenges that it faced. Respect for international law and the norms of international relations was a precondition for effective humanitarian assistance, which should be in line with the Charter of the United Nations and guided by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

10. Disputes should be settled by political means, with an emphasis on maintaining regional peace and stability. At the same time, the international community should prevent the politicization of humanitarian affairs, promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and establish a global governance system to steer the process of globalization. Developed countries, meanwhile, should meet their commitments with regard to official development assistance, and humanitarian resources should not be increased at the expense of the resources allocated to development. In particular, developed countries should increase the financial, technical and capacity-building support afforded to the least developed countries.

11. Climate change, food insecurity and other factors exacerbated the risk of, and vulnerability to, natural disasters. Accordingly, the international community should actively implement the Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework, enhance the adaptive capacity of developing countries and widely disseminate advanced infrastructure, technology and expertise.

12. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs should further involve developing countries in its work and give them a voice in international humanitarian affairs. Humanitarian assistance should be provided in accordance with the actual needs and priorities of recipient governments.

13. China was willing to deepen international cooperation in disaster risk reduction and management, and, in recent years, had provided dozens of countries with emergency humanitarian assistance. In 2017, China had provided Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and other countries with ¥ 330 million, in addition to food assistance of US$ 34 million. The China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund was in operation, with the first round of projects directed at assisting refugees and migrants, improving the safety of peacekeepers and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

14. **The observer for Jordan** said that the meeting was taking place in the context of a deteriorating humanitarian situation, exacerbated by a widening funding gap. All stakeholders in the international community should share the associated burden.

15. In the face of some of the most considerable humanitarian challenges since the end of the Second World War, it was important to find pioneering solutions to the huge disparity between humanitarian needs and the financial and other assistance provided. Cooperation between the humanitarian and development sectors should be strengthened, and support should be given to developing countries prior to crises.

16. The Government of Jordan called on the United Nations to step up its efforts in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, all of which were affected by so-called grade 3 crises. Jordan itself was boldly assuming its humanitarian and moral responsibilities with regard to the Syrian civil war. More than 1.4 million Syrian nationals were currently living in Jordan, accounting for over 20 per cent of the total population. However, the ramifications of the war for Jordan went beyond mere migration, affecting the Government's budget and the country's infrastructure and economic development.

17. The task of dealing with the emergencies affecting the countries that neighboured Jordan was one that should be shouldered by all. In that connection, the implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the outcomes of other

international humanitarian processes required an efficient strengthening of international cooperation.

18. The Government of Jordan had recently adopted a three-year response plan for the Syrian crisis and was rolling out a multisectoral resilience-building programme. Given the considerable cost of such initiatives, it hoped that the funding commitments made at the Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region would be honoured as soon as possible.

19. Respect for international humanitarian law was fundamental. Jordan strongly condemned attacks on schools and the military use of schools, which were flagrant violations of that law. It also called on the international community to protect persons employed in the humanitarian sector.

20. **The representative of South Africa** said that her country welcomed the Secretary-General's report, which would facilitate the sharing of best practices and experiences.

21. The key to an effective transition from relief to early recovery and development was enabling systematic and predictable planning and coordination support. It was important to move away from the current situation of inter-agency competition towards a model of collaborative efficiency.

22. It was worrying that, despite agreement on the Transformative Agenda, international humanitarian aid had not been made a priority for transformation. Greater accountability and swifter, more targeted humanitarian aid was needed. There should be a collective effort to give humanitarian issues the same consideration as the pillars of peace and security, development, and human rights.

23. Reports of famine and food insecurity in Somalia, eastern Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen were of great concern, as was the funding gap for meeting needs on the ground. South Africa urged both traditional and non-traditional donors to respond positively to calls for humanitarian financial assistance, and supported the Secretary-General's recommendation to increase the annual funding of the Central Emergency Response Fund to US$ 1 billion by 2018.

24. The Government of South Africa had signed, ratified and incorporated into domestic law all the treaties relevant to international humanitarian law and international human rights law. It called on other States to do the same and on parties to conflicts to comply with the two bodies of law.

25. **The representative of Colombia** said that humanitarian crises were not confined to a particular geographical area. Consequently, international cooperation and solidarity were critical to finding appropriate, sustainable solutions.

26. Since crises sparked by non-international armed conflict could last for decades, it was unrealistic to label them as emergencies. The international community was confronted with structural problems that required innovative approaches. In Colombia, it was significant that peace talks had taken place concurrently with the implementation of the Victims and Land Restitution Act. The implication was that the end of the Colombian conflict entailed not only the cessation of hostilities but also the full integration of victims into a reconciled society. For the peace process to be durable, Colombia needed the backing of the international community.

27. The nexus between humanitarian assistance and development created a responsibility to tackle the root causes of the Colombian conflict. There was a need to restore violated rights and provide guarantees of non-repetition. Humanitarian needs, like the conflicts that caused them, evolved over time. As a result, humanitarian actors and States had to adapt their approaches to changing realities.

28. Perhaps the most valuable lesson learned during the Colombian peace process was that victims could not continue to be viewed as passive stakeholders in conflicts. They were, above all, rights holders, and should play a decisive role in conflict resolution. Moreover, a desire to preserve their dignity should underpin all the work carried out by the international community.

29. **The observer for Montenegro** said that the world was witnessing the biggest humanitarian catastrophe since the end of the Second World War. Large parts of the populations of Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and the Chad Basin had been struck by famine, while nearly 20 per cent of the global population lived in extreme poverty.

30. Montenegro appreciated the Secretary-General's emphasis on the prevention of human suffering and was particularly supportive of the New Way of Working initiative, which had emerged as part of the Agenda for Humanity. States needed to work together to ensure that persons who had been left behind were able to return to the global community as partners in achieving sustainable development. Interaction among Member States, the private sector, civil society and those in need of relief was essential for progress, and the inclusion of affected persons was especially important.

31. Efforts by humanitarian NGOs to assist at-risk populations were admirable. The international community needed to explore practical ways to support local actors and contribute to local financial security, while upholding the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

32. As part of the process of accession to the European Union, Montenegro was putting in place a solid legislative framework for the provision of humanitarian and development assistance. The Government had established an intersectoral working group with a mandate to draft a law on developmental cooperation and humanitarian assistance, which was expected to be adopted by the end of 2017.

33. The appeal to leave no one behind applied also to traditionally underrepresented groups, including young people, ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities and women and girls. Political will and the expeditious provision of relief were essential for meeting the needs of such groups. Any necessary delay would threaten the livelihoods of populations in precarious circumstances and weaken efforts to attain sustainable development.

34. **The observer for Sri Lanka** said that his country had itself grappled with humanitarian crises, including a protracted conflict and, one month previously, a devastating flood that had claimed 300 lives. The Government was grateful for the humanitarian support that had been received from bilateral partners, the United Nations system and international donors. National security forces had been involved in rescue operations, supported by a strong ground-level administrative network.

35. Sri Lanka had set up mechanisms to fulfil its commitments under the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement. However, there were challenges to mainstreaming disaster risk management in livelihood development and poverty reduction programmes, building resilience at the community level and developing disaster risk profiles to encourage policymakers to take risk-informed decisions.

36. The Government had established a national insurance scheme to pay compensation for houses damaged and destroyed by natural disasters, but more investment was needed for rebuilding in cases where there were serious capacity gaps. Moreover, the development of disaster risk management measures using modern science and technologies that guaranteed accurate early warnings had been identified as a priority.

37. In August 2016, the Cabinet of Sri Lanka had approved a national policy on durable solutions for conflict-affected displacement, which provided for institutional mechanisms to respond to the needs of internally displaced persons. The Government had undertaken a voluntary commitment to introduce a national human rights action plan for the period 2017-2021, which included a section on the rights of internally displaced persons and refugee returnees.

38. To ensure, by 2030, that no one was left behind, the international community needed to strengthen its humanitarian response, while respecting humanitarian principles; build capacities for disaster preparedness at the national level; manage risks; enhance resilience on the basis of scientific data and technology; take disaster risk into consideration when making investment decisions; fill funding gaps by making unearmarked contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund and humanitarian flash appeals; and coordinate

operations, including joint planning and programming efforts by development and humanitarian agencies, giving priority to the needs on the ground.

39. **The observer for Morocco** said that humanitarian crises had led to the mass displacement of populations, who were subsequently exposed to security threats, exploitation and human trafficking. A combination of armed conflicts, natural disasters and food crises had engendered circumstances that hindered the efforts of humanitarian actors to assist affected populations.

40. Recent international experience of handling natural disasters highlighted the need for efficient coordination among humanitarian actors and other stakeholders. Morocco condemned the obstruction of humanitarian work, including all forms of violence against aid workers. Access to vulnerable populations was indispensable, and the delivery of humanitarian assistance should be shaped by fact-based assessments of the needs of affected populations.

41. Humanitarian actors should not be influenced by political considerations; their work should be governed by the principles of impartiality and independence. The international humanitarian response system should continue to manage specific incidents without losing sight of vulnerabilities. An integrated approach aimed at placing local actors at the heart of humanitarian work could help to bolster the operational capacity of humanitarian agencies and organizations.

42. Member States should supply predictable funding for humanitarian work in order to respond to the needs of vulnerable populations and contribute to a stronger, more effective international humanitarian system.

43. **The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** said that humanitarian assistance should be provided in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and with the guiding principles set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182. Specifically, the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of the States should be observed and States receiving humanitarian assistance should have the primary role in its coordination. Her country welcomed the Secretary-General's report and the draft resolution on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations. At the national level, the framework for humanitarian action was outlined in the Constitution and in the National Plan for 2013-2019. On the basis of the latter instrument, the Government offered support through the Simón Bolívar Humanitarian Assistance Task Force.

44. Strengthening disaster preparedness was fundamental to ensuring the transition from the relief phase to the recovery and development phases. Preparations should include anticipating the coordination needs of actors with different capacities, enhancing accountability and supplying information at an early stage to facilitate timely recovery.

45. There was a need to examine the root causes of humanitarian crises, particularly those resulting from colonial or neo-colonial practices. The community of nations should put an end to the illegal occupation of territory, the excessive use of force against civilians and forced displacement. To reduce the risk of humanitarian emergencies caused by natural disasters, States should promote and strengthen the implementation of the Paris Agreement. It was also important to continue to expand national and local humanitarian capacities. The need for capacity-building could not, however, be used to justify a failure to observe the universal principles of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States.

46. **The representative of Italy** said that Italy was strengthening the interlinkages between development and humanitarian tools, thus increasing its capacity to tackle the root causes of crises and to link relief and rehabilitation to development.

47. Italy fully endorsed the New Way of Working initiative and was convinced that the vast majority of modern-day crises were man-made and conflict-driven, and that extremist violence and instability were concurrent drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition. However, food insecurity itself could fuel violence and prolong conflicts. Building long-term resilience was fundamental, and the decisions made at the recent Group of Seven summit in Taormina would contribute to such resilience.

48. Italy upheld international humanitarian law, including the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, not only by States but also by non-State actors. Humanitarian access was still one of the most delicate topics on the international agenda. The protection of civilians must remain at the heart of the international community's policymaking guidelines. Italy was committed to preventing, and ensuring accountability for, any attacks directed at humanitarian and health-care structures and personnel, and to preventing the military use of schools, in accordance with the Safe Schools Declaration.

49. Along with its European Union partners, Italy was engaged in the protection of vulnerable groups in emergencies, and had devised mandatory ad hoc guidelines to better include persons with disabilities in humanitarian financing work. In 2017, Italy had increased its humanitarian budget by 10 per cent to nearly €115 million; a further 10 per cent increase was expected in 2018. Italy had also doubled its contribution to the Central Emergency Response Fund.

50. Italy would uphold its commitment to the search and rescue operation that had so far saved hundreds of thousands of lives in the Mediterranean, but migration was a global challenge that required a long-term, coordinated approach. It was clear that humanitarian action could not substitute for political solutions. Courageous leadership, early responses, investment in stability and the broad participation of civil society all played a key role in preventing and resolving conflicts and humanitarian crises.

51. **The observer for Indonesia** said that collective efforts were instrumental in meeting humanitarian needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities. While humanitarian action was important, the best way to protect human rights was prevention. It was therefore imperative to strengthen existing preventive mechanisms, including by ensuring respect for international norms.

52. In its efforts to find comprehensive, durable solutions to the global humanitarian crisis, the international community should ensure that the various post-2015 processes contributed to building community resilience and reducing vulnerabilities; that the preparatory processes for global compacts on migrants and refugees and their outcomes generated high-level commitment and action; and that expertise from the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the high-level political forum on sustainable development was used to promote coherence and synergies among all post-2015 processes and outcomes.

53. Building resilience at the community level was one of the priorities of his country's National Medium-term Development Plan for 2015-2019. On a related note, Indonesia had developed a national road map for 2015-2030 to help it to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The road map focused on people-centred development that was comprehensive, equitable and sustainable, and laid out a strategy for ensuring that vulnerable members of the community, especially the poor and persons with disabilities, were not left behind.

54. **The representative of Iraq** said that confronting and preventing increasingly complex humanitarian challenges required the international community to share experiences and best practices. There was a need to improve partnerships in the field of humanitarian development and international finance institutions, and to uncover the reasons for forced displacement. The global compacts that States had agreed to develop under the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants would provide an opportunity to tackle the issue of displacement and enhance the protection given to displaced persons. In that connection, national and local authorities should be encouraged to include displaced persons in their development plans.

55. Increased humanitarian needs in 2016 had widened the humanitarian funding gap in Iraq and reduced the country's ability to respond effectively. Cooperation was necessary to construct societies and institutions that were able to adapt to crises and generate conditions conducive to development, gender equality and universal education.

56. Solutions had to be found for the financial crises that were currently affecting most countries in the world, so as to ensure that requests for humanitarian assistance were not ignored. In addition, humanitarian workers and medical personnel in conflict zones should be protected.

57. Iraq was locked in a struggle to eliminate the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant from its territory. Despite the barbarity of its enemy, the Government had not failed in its duty of care to civilians, and Iraqi forces had respected international humanitarian law and human rights standards. One of the Government's priorities was to evacuate civilians from conflict areas and provide them with appropriate shelter until those areas had been liberated and cleared of mines. Civilians who returned to their homes were provided with basic services by the relevant government ministries.

58. Iraq called on the international community to assist reconstruction efforts in the country and on the United Nations and other international organizations to build the capacity of States to handle crises and thereby prevent and alleviate human suffering.

59. **The representative of the Russian Federation** said that international relations were unstable, the potential for conflict was huge, mechanisms for overcoming crises had stalled and food insecurity was a growing problem. The world was experiencing an unprecedented increase in the number, scale and duration of humanitarian crises, leading to slower economic development and mass migration. The financial resources available to respond to humanitarian needs were becoming insufficient. Against that backdrop, it was necessary to reform the international humanitarian response system, with a focus on enhancing the effectiveness of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and humanitarian coordinators. Ongoing reforms were insufficiently transparent; during the Council's humanitarian affairs segment, there should be an open dialogue on all the humanitarian activities carried out by the United Nations.

60. The Russian Federation believed in the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence and respect for sovereignty, without which humanitarian assistance was liable to be subjected to military and political agendas. A model based on a smooth transition from recovery to development was preferable to nexus approaches, as it better reflected the reality on the ground and provided a clear framework for dovetailing humanitarian assistance with measures to promote long-term development.

61. To enhance food security, there was a need for sustainable agricultural production, a sound use of natural resources and the introduction of innovative practices at all stages of the food chain. The Russian Federation was a major food producer and exporter, and regularly provided humanitarian food assistance through bilateral channels. Together with specialized United Nations agencies, it was carrying out development projects aimed at providing food in schools and fostering sustainable agriculture.

62. Between 2014 and 2016, the Russian Federation had donated US$ 240 million to overcome the consequences of humanitarian crises, including those caused by conflicts. The Russian Federation had considerable experience of disaster risk reduction and was in favour of sharing best practices in that regard. It valued the draft resolution on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (E/2017/L.24), which contained a number of important new guidelines for improving humanitarian responses.

63. It was regrettable that one of the speakers at a previous meeting had made politicized and completely unfounded allegations against the Russian Federation. The crisis in south-eastern Ukraine had been caused by the antiterrorist operations conducted by the Kyiv authorities against their own people and the Donbass trade blockade, which constituted a violation of human rights. The attention of the international community should be drawn to the issue and an appropriate declaration should be drafted in response.

64. **The representative of Brazil** said that the topic chosen for the humanitarian affairs segment of the Council's 2017 session was a stark reminder of the international community's collective failure, but also its potential ability to increase solidarity and promote positive changes in human lives. "Leaving no one behind" was a call for concerted action in response to the mass displacement of persons. A humane, sensitive, compassionate and people-centred approach was required.

65. Brazil took note of the Secretary-General's report and wished to emphasize the importance of addressing the operational aspects of humanitarian assistance as a means of preventing politicization and boosting coordination. Brazil shared the concern expressed in

the report about the protection of humanitarian workers and medical personnel in conflict zones. It agreed that counter-terrorism frameworks must be adapted to mitigate any potentially negative humanitarian impact. Any measures taken should be in line with international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law.

66. Brazil further agreed that host communities of displaced persons required more support. At the same time, there should be a focus on broadening admission channels for refugees and people fleeing humanitarian crises, to ensure that they were not left behind. Brazil fully supported the adoption of a new approach that incorporated long-term sustainable development concerns in humanitarian operations. However, development and humanitarian affairs should not be conflated, especially from the institutional and operational points of view, as addressing humanitarian crises was a multidimensional challenge that might require initiatives that did not fall under the development pillar. The best way to bridge the humanitarian-development divide was to promote better coordination both within the United Nations system law and on the ground.

67. **The representative of Uganda** said that many people were being driven from their homes by natural or man-made disasters. Solutions had to be found. In Uganda, there had been large influxes of refugees and migrants, many of them women and children, who required food, shelter, health care, education and other basic social services. Around 2,000 refugees entered Uganda on a daily basis, adding to the existing refugee population of 1.2 million. The Government's resources being limited, it called on the international community to do its part and provide much-needed assistance.

68. In response to the arrival of South Sudanese and other refugees in northern Uganda, the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees had been organized in Kampala with the aim of mobilizing international support. The Summit provided a critical opportunity for donor countries to contribute to the Government's rapid response funds. Countries that were heavily involved in rendering humanitarian assistance required technical aid and capacity-building, including training for aid workers on the ground, in order to build their resilience and ability to deal with crisis situations.

69. **The representative of Viet Nam** said that, as one of the countries that was most vulnerable to climate change, Viet Nam was not immune to humanitarian crises. Climate change had increased the frequency and intensity of extreme weather incidents, with serious repercussions on the environment, food security, water resources, health and livelihoods. In 2014, Viet Nam had promulgated a law on natural disaster prevention and control. It had furthermore put in place a number of mitigation and adaptation policies. At the international level, Viet Nam spared no effort in fulfilling its commitments and obligations related to natural disaster prevention and control.

70. The El Niño and La Niña weather patterns were projected to cause food insecurity for more than 60 million people worldwide, although that figure could exceed 100 million unless appropriate action was taken. The patterns had led to drought in some parts of Viet Nam and to flooding and saltwater intrusion in others. In addition to adopting national policies and programmes, the Government participated in joint search and rescue operations and fostered regional and international cooperation with regard to early warning systems and the sharing of information and good practices related to disaster prevention and reduction.

71. Years of struggle against man-made and natural disasters had shown the importance of strong national ownership and leadership, the engagement of all sectors of society and unwavering international commitment and support. Coordination and solidarity at all levels were of the utmost importance in mobilizing resources and ensuring that no region, country, community or individual was left behind.

72. **The observer for Cuba** said that international humanitarian assistance should be rendered in compliance with the guiding principles set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182, at the request and with the consent of recipient States and in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

73. Hunger and poverty affected billions of people around the world owing to factors such as income inequality, the global food crisis, job insecurity, climate change, an unjust

international economic order and natural disasters, which, in recent years, had grown in frequency and had struck the poorest countries with unprecedented force. Cuba was exposed to negative natural and technological events, which had shaped the development of the country's civil defence system over the previous 55 years.

74. In the light of the priorities established in the Sendai Framework, Cuba had updated its institutional and regulatory frameworks for disaster risk reduction, particularly at the local level. Sea level rise projections were taken into account in national economic and social development planning, and climate change adaptation measures were viewed as part of disaster risk reduction efforts. Early warning systems were being fine-tuned, and disaster management authorities and protection measures were being strengthened.

75. Despite the constraints occasioned by the commercial, economic and financial embargo that was being imposed on it by the United States of America, Cuba would continue to make a priority of international cooperation and the exchange of experience and good practices related to the prevention and handling of natural disasters. The tenth International Congress on Disasters, which was to be held in Havana in July 2018, would serve as an ideal forum in that regard.

76. The Government of Cuba was prepared to continue supporting countries affected by natural disasters, as demonstrated by the work of the award-winning Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specializing in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics.

77. **The representative of Algeria** said that the humanitarian challenges currently faced by the world stemmed from both man-made crises and natural disasters linked, increasingly, to climatic variations. Humanitarian actors, operating in a fragile environment, had to work effectively and avoid the politicization of the aid that they provided. Respect for humanitarian principles was the best way to preserve the long-term credibility of such actors, while the guiding principles set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182 were as pertinent as ever.

78. Algeria was concerned about the infringement, in crisis zones, of international law in general, and international humanitarian law in particular. The collective efforts of States, humanitarian agencies and other stakeholders should be geared towards preventing crises and identifying their underlying causes. In the past, some cyclical natural disasters could have been averted if commitments with regard to official development assistance had been honoured.

79. Humanitarian vulnerabilities, underdevelopment and natural disasters often co-occurred with conflicts and insecurity. Consequently, it was important to promote peace and security in initiatives aimed at reducing those vulnerabilities. Algeria had made individual and collective commitments to find political solutions to conflicts that had given rise to humanitarian crises.

80. In Africa, the fragility of the humanitarian situation was increasingly clear, a situation exacerbated by funding gaps that rendered responses inadequate. The spread of famine and the return of diseases that had been considered eradicated should serve as a wake-up call to the international community as a whole. Urgent, targeted responses were required, including the provision of unearmarked contributions to humanitarian agencies to enable them to launch programmes in emergencies and in prolonged crises.

81. **The representative of Pakistan** said that the draft resolution contained in document E/2017/L.24 comprehensively addressed issues related to humanitarian assistance and reinforced the framework and principles for an effective and coordinated response to contemporary challenges, as set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182. Humanitarian emergencies were increasingly complex and called for greater international cooperation and coordination. With 141 million people in need of assistance, the yawning humanitarian funding gap was of great concern. To provide effective relief, an urgent scaling up of multi-year, unearmarked funding and an early fulfilment of pledges were needed. In that connection, Pakistan welcomed the recommendation to double the Central Emergency Response Fund annual funding target by 2018.

82. Pakistan was prone to large-scale natural disasters and the ravages of climate change. In response, appropriate institutional, infrastructural and legislative frameworks had been established. The national disaster management authority was at the forefront of disaster relief, recovery and rehabilitation, and it shared its experiences with others. The Government was fulfilling its World Humanitarian Summit commitments in the area of disaster preparedness, reducing vulnerabilities and risk, and building the resilience of affected communities.

83. Pakistan had hosted millions of Afghans for decades and continued to provide them with protection and assistance. The situation had placed a tremendous strain on the socioeconomic fabric, environment and political and security landscapes of the country. Pakistan expected any future global compact on refugees to provide a robust mechanism for equitable and predictable burden- and responsibility-sharing, and to help to counter xenophobia and discrimination.

84. In the absence of political will to end violence and reinforce protection, humanitarian solutions alone were insufficient. Pakistan was encouraged by efforts to integrate relief and recovery with development. Existing frameworks and agreements constituted a solid basis for collective action to ensure that the fruits of peace and prosperity were reaped by everyone, everywhere. However, the looming threat of famine in many parts of the world was a reminder that the international community could not afford to lose the momentum that it had generated in recent years.

85. **The observer for Thailand** said that the international community needed to accelerate its efforts to bridge the humanitarian-development divide and place people at the heart of its humanitarian action. People in vulnerable situations should not be perceived as victims. Instead, they should be equipped with knowledge and skills to enable them to contribute to humanitarian work. In order to mobilize adequate resources in times of emergency, it was necessary to improve the availability of data on risks and on the immediate needs of affected populations. Community resilience, self-sufficiency and preparedness should be enhanced on the basis of existing capacities. Successful home-grown approaches, including local solutions, should be shared and, when appropriate, adjusted and applied to alleviate human suffering. There was also a need for improved coordination among United Nations agencies and relevant regional and international organizations, including in synchronizing multidisciplinary support for Member States.

86. Like most countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Thailand was prone to natural disasters. The 2017 Constitution stated that all Thai citizens had a duty to cooperate in disaster prevention and mitigation. Moreover, the Government had developed a national disaster prevention and mitigation plan and had incorporated disaster risk reduction and management in several specific plans for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. Work on a climate change adaptation plan was under way.

87. In early 2017, southern Thailand had been hit by some of the most severe flooding in decades. A national emergency operations centre had been set up to help to assess the situation and deliver relief. Ultimately, the Government's focus on ensuring social protection and on enhancing awareness and preparedness at the community level had enabled it to handle the situation.

88. Building partnerships was imperative. With that in mind, the Government had organized a post-disaster needs assessment workshop in Bangkok, was training its search and rescue teams to meet relevant international standards by 2021 and would host the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group Asia-Pacific Regional Exercise in 2019.

89. Thailand had played a leading role in preparing the Post-2015 Health Development Agenda of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and in establishing the ASEAN Centre of Military Medicine in Bangkok. Its humanitarian work was guided by the principles of moderation, reasonableness and risk management. It had introduced early warning systems and disseminated information on disaster response and risk reduction in many communities nationwide.

90. **The representative of the World Food Programme (WFP)**, speaking also on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), said that

food and agriculture were key to the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to the 2017 Global Report on Food Crises, 108 million people in 48 countries were suffering from acute food insecurity, compared to 80 million in 2016. Disasters, land and environmental degradation, climate change and protracted crises were exacerbating the situation, while child undernourishment, stunting and mortality were also of concern.

91. There needed to be a fundamental transformation in how the international community tackled the causes and consequences of hunger. To achieve food security for those furthest behind, three significant blind spots had to be addressed, by investing in and supporting smallholders, who managed over 90 per cent of the world's farms; scaling up social protection systems in low-income countries; and ending women's disempowerment, which represented a fundamental barrier to the achievement of zero hunger.

92. WFP and FAO were contributing to global efforts to provide decision-makers and the public with transparent, harmonized information. Since 2016, through the Global Report on Food Crises, they had been working collectively to coordinate the compilation of food security and nutrition analyses and thereby inform resource allocation for humanitarian and resilience responses. The Global Network on Food Crises, which was being established, would enhance cooperation and act as a catalyst for shared analyses of needs and of the impacts of current and future crises.

93. Conflict was a major driver of food insecurity, which had deteriorated to unprecedented levels, pushing populations to the brink of starvation. When WFP, FAO and their partners had sufficient funding and access, lives and livelihoods were saved, famine was prevented and resilience was strengthened by linking humanitarian assistance to sustainable development.

94. WFP and FAO appealed to States to provide flexible, multi-year funding to help to lift people out of the vicious circle of food and nutrition insecurity and poverty.

95. **The representative of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** said that the international community needed to be smarter about how it prepared for, and responded to, emergencies in order to prevent suffering. It was unacceptable that 20 million people were on the brink of starvation in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen even though the signs of calamity had long been apparent. Less than a third of the humanitarian funding needs for those countries were covered, and cholera and measles were wreaking havoc.

96. Humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law were more relevant than ever and should remain at the centre of approaches to crises. However, it was also time for the international community to move beyond business as usual. Progress was slow, but there were glimmers of hope. The Every Woman, Every Child initiative, to which IFRC was proud to contribute, was shining a much-needed light on resource gaps that were affecting the provision of essential health services to children under 5 years of age and women in situations of violence and protracted crises.

97. Another cause for optimism was the gradual operationalization of the many international commitments to invest in community resilience, including through the provision of cash transfers and training in community-based health care and, particularly, responses to communities' own assessments of how they could make themselves stronger. In that connection, IFRC welcomed the recognition, in draft resolution E/2017/L.24, of risk management tools and the further development of innovative approaches such as forecast-based financing.

98. There were indications that local responders were being taken more seriously. Through the Grand Bargain, the issue of localization had been elevated to the top of the humanitarian financing agenda, and both donors and agencies were starting to consider far-reaching changes to the way they interacted with local actors. At the same time, governments were increasingly adopting the new laws, rules and procedures that they needed to oversee and facilitate the provision of international disaster assistance in their territories.

99. **The representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** said that draft resolution E/2017/L.24 highlighted States' appreciation of the differing needs of different people, the broad scope of activities that constituted effective humanitarian action and States' commitment to international law and humanitarian principles.

100. States were rightly placing fresh emphasis on inclusion, connectivity and obligation in humanitarian work. Inclusion was essential to meeting the particular needs of all people affected by armed conflict. ICRC wished to see an appreciation of intersectionality emerge in humanitarian practice and welcomed clear commitments to promote the participation of national and local authorities, persons with disabilities and, in programming decisions, people affected by armed conflict. It also appreciated States' determination to support education services. Inclusion meant access, both by people in need to appropriate services, and to those people by humanitarian workers.

101. A connection between relief and development resources was vital, and ongoing food emergencies and cholera epidemics illustrated the need to support basic services in times of crisis. If services were left behind in armed conflicts then people would be, too.

102. Humanitarian action required resilient development infrastructure in urban and rural areas alike. International humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights law set proper standards for inclusion, access and the provision of relief, while humanitarian principles enabled a fair assessment of needs and an unbiased humanitarian response.

103. **The representative of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)** said that humanity, dignity and safety were fundamental principles of good migration, but were easily eroded when movement occurred out of necessity rather than choice. Migrants and displaced persons were among the most vulnerable in crisis contexts and were too often left out of the planning and development initiatives needed to reduce their exposure to risk and empower them as agents of their own solutions. The likelihood of disaster-related displacement was 60 per cent greater than it had been just four decades previously. Addressing displacement was indispensable for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

104. Draft resolution E/2017/L.24 comprehensively covered several of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of modern times, provided practical opportunities for enhanced humanitarian development, coherence and coordination, and rightly recognized that progress required predictable, flexible and multi-year funding. IOM supported calls to double the Central Emergency Response Fund annual funding target by 2018 and to broaden and diversify the Fund's income base.

105. Migrants were often among the worst affected by crises and had specific, heightened vulnerabilities owing to their status. IOM encouraged States to scale up migrant-inclusive crisis preparedness efforts, integrate migrants in all relevant planning and recovery actions, invest in resilience-building, uphold migrants' human rights and apply humanitarian principles in the protection of migrants.

106. In responding to migrants' needs and countering the risks and vulnerabilities that they faced, contextual analysis was key. Mobility helped to save lives and could play a part in fostering self-reliance and in the progressive resolution of displacement situations. Humanitarian work should be needs-driven, people-centred and inclusive of all affected individuals, including migrants.

107. IOM remained committed to those left most vulnerable in times of crisis and dedicated to improving coordinated responses and working towards collective outcomes.

108. **The observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta** said that the vocation of the Sovereign Order of Malta had always been to care for society's vulnerable. In that spirit, it had participated in the 2016 General Assembly high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, at which its representative had emphasized the need to implement development programmes that covered extended time periods and were complemented by emergency aid.

109. At the World Humanitarian Summit, the Order had joined governments and humanitarian stakeholders in recognizing the role of faith-based organizations in reducing human suffering through material and spiritual assistance.

110. The Order welcomed the Secretary-General's 2017 report and supported his recommendation to reinforce humanitarian principles, which, along with international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights, must be respected.

111. The growing number of attacks in conflict areas against civilians, humanitarian workers, medical personnel and facilities, schools and places of worship was of deep concern. Such attacks had an immediate impact on the Order's activities and deprived local populations of basic services, leading to poverty and forced displacement. Urgent measures were therefore required to address the situation.

112. The Order was committed to contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by taking steps to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals that were directly related to its activities. It worked with affected populations to implement reconstruction and disaster preparedness programmes and assisted refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons in countries of origin, transit and arrival. It stayed after crises had passed with the objective of reducing poverty and vulnerability in the interests of long-term development.

113. It was important for all parties to ensure humanitarian access to populations in crisis areas and the full cooperation of national and local authorities. The Order was continuing its work in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey, and would uphold its annual contribution to the Central Emergency Response Fund. It encouraged the provision of multi-year, flexible funding, a reduction in bureaucracy and the direct funding of local actors. However, the increasing pressure on humanitarian assistance would subside only once political solutions had been found to the many conflicts that plagued the world.

114. **The representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** said that UNICEF welcomed opportunities to promote new ways of working as a means to fulfil its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It was fully committed to building a more effective, accountable and robust operational system that put children's rights and needs at the heart of humanitarian and development action.

115. There was persistent disregard for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles. High-intensity conflicts were characterized by a large number of child casualties, a high prevalence of association of children with armed forces, the detention of children for alleged security reasons and targeted or indiscriminate attacks in civilian areas that resulted in the destruction of life-saving and life-sustaining infrastructure and services. The international community had a collective obligation not to allow the situation to become the new norm, and all parties to conflicts should facilitate unconditional, unimpeded and sustained access to people in desperate need. Furthermore, UNICEF was concerned that donors' conditions related to counter-terrorism regulations might have a negative impact on humanitarian action and localization efforts.

116. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants underscored the acute risks faced by refugee and migrant children and, crucially, included a commitment to ensure that such children could return to school in destination countries and outlined measures to keep families together and counter xenophobia.

117. Given the highly dynamic nature of the current humanitarian situation, the need for predictable, flexible and unearmarked funds was critical. More multi-year funding that broke down the humanitarian-development divide would promote efficiency in meeting short-term needs, with long-term outcomes. Research into returns on investments demonstrated the high value, including in terms of results for children, of investing in preparedness. When UNICEF teams on the ground seized early opportunities to repair water-pumping stations, they delivered safe water to more people, in a more equitable manner and at a lower cost over time. However, such actions required upfront financing in high-risk environments.

118. In 2016, the top five resource partners of UNICEF had provided a little over 50 per cent of total emergency contributions. While that was generous and appreciated, UNICEF welcomed broadened partnerships and donor bases to increase the diversity, predictability and effectiveness of funding.

119. **The representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** said that, according to the most recent Global Trends Report, 65.6 million people, including a record 22.5 million refugees, had been forcibly displaced in 2016. More than half of the world's displaced were children. The situation was unacceptable and spoke louder than ever to the need for solidarity and a common purpose in preventing and resolving crises. The most affected States, which were almost all low- and middle-income countries, were those that neighboured conflict zones.

120. The international refugee regime had not been designed to deal with long-standing dependent populations, and yet short-term humanitarianism was increasingly being relied upon to respond to long-term displacement. The secondary movement of refugees had put that approach under the spotlight, leading to a reaction that stigmatized refugees, but also to a renewed commitment to international solidarity and burden-sharing.

121. While it was important to be realistic about negative trends, there were grounds for optimism, including the Sustainable Development Goals, the new Secretary-General's emphasis on prevention and mediation, and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. The pledge to leave no one behind should apply equally to refugees, and, if a country was serious about meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, it had to take into account all the people in its territory.

122. Partnerships remained central to the ability of UNHCR to deliver on its mandate. In implementing its strategic directions for 2017-2021, UNHCR would give priority to extending and strengthening partnerships in ways that made the most effective use of available resources and expertise. In that regard, it would remain fully engaged in humanitarian and development coordination mechanisms and would continue to contribute to discussions on rendering them more effective.

123. UNHCR was rolling out a multi-year planning initiative in 23 pilot countries. The initiative would seek to address root causes and to link humanitarian and development efforts, notably through alliances with non-traditional humanitarian actors. With regard to the eighteenth replenishment of the World Bank's International Development Association, the decisions to allocate US$ 14 billion to fragile conflict- and violence-affected States and to establish a US$ 2 billion sub-window for refugee-hosting countries were groundbreaking and could support comprehensive refugee responses.

124. **The representative of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** said that civilians in conflict zones were exposed to the deadly threat posed by improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war. For that reason, the international community had a moral duty to integrate mine action into humanitarian planning, programming and financing.

125. The aims of UNMAS included maximizing synergies, bridging divides among different sectors, strengthening partnerships and making humanitarian responses faster and more effective, needs-driven and people-centred. Like UNICEF, UNMAS had translated the commitments that it had made at the World Humanitarian Summit into concrete action, including with regard to localization and the empowerment of local women partners.

126. More than 5,000 UNMAS staff members were currently deployed on the front line in 18 countries and territories. Over the previous two years, the intensification of conflicts and the use of a wide range of weaponry had led to a dramatic rise in the number of civilians affected. Increasingly, the United Nations and its partners were operating in violent, complex and asymmetric environments, in which parties to conflicts blatantly disregarded international humanitarian law.

127. While the number of casualties caused by anti-personnel mines had decreased in recent times, the overall number of casualties caused by improvised explosive devices, anti-vehicle mines and other explosive remnants of war had grown. In Iraq, Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic, terrorist groups were planting mines and booby-trapping homes and

key infrastructure on an unprecedented scale. More victims of explosions were being left with lifelong disabilities and in need of both emergency and long-term care. There was therefore an urgent need to adhere to the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

128. Large-scale mine risk education campaigns, risk education and mentoring for aid workers and contamination assessments were all crucial preventive measures. The elaboration of international mine action and improvised explosive devices safety and training standards and the building of national response capacities were also important.

129. Mine action should no longer be an afterthought. Rather, it should be at the core of protection and effective humanitarian planning and programming. Over the previous two decades, UNMAS had consistently adapted its programmes to the evolving needs of people affected by the legacy of war. For the international community, the time had come to be brave and to translate support into tangible action.

130. **The observer for the State of Palestine** said that the work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the occupied Palestinian territory was vital. The State of Palestine attached the utmost importance to humanitarian action in the territory, where the situation had deteriorated because of Israeli occupation and a lack of access for humanitarian aid organizations. International law was not being respected, but compliance with it was indispensable for the protection of vulnerable groups.

131. The pledge to leave no one behind should apply equally to those living in the occupied Palestinian territory. With that in mind, and in the fiftieth anniversary year of Israeli occupation, the State of Palestine renewed its call to the international community to increase the level of support provided.

Draft resolution E/2017/L.24: Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

132. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

133. **The observer for the Holy See** said that, despite the cooperation of many delegations, the negotiations on the draft resolution had been particularly difficult. While there had been some progress in shaping specific paragraphs on famine and food insecurity, it was regrettable that the controversial Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health had been incorporated in the text.

134. The aforementioned Package was a set of priority activities that included 13 different reproductive health kits, some of which provided the equipment for abortion procedures such as vacuum aspiration. The Holy See wished to insist that health-care services should never operate to the detriment of the unborn, who had an equal right to life. While acknowledging the particular risks that women and children faced during humanitarian emergencies and their specific needs, including with regard to basic health care, the Holy See could not accept abortion as an appropriate solution. As a result, it disassociated itself from the paragraphs of the draft resolution that promoted the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health.

135. The Holy See did not consider abortion or access to abortion or abortifacients to be dimensions of the terms "sexual and reproductive health" and "sexual and reproductive health-care services". Moreover, it understood the term "gender" as being grounded in biological sexual identity and difference.

136. **The President** said that he took it that the Council wished to adopt draft resolution E/2017/L.24.

137. *It was so decided.*

138. **Mr. O'Brien** (Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator) said that, in a context of staggering and escalating humanitarian needs, the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council was an essential platform for States and other key stakeholders to discuss how to meet current and future challenges. Through the implementation of the Agenda for Humanity and the adoption of a

strong preventive approach, systematic changes were being introduced to ensure a more effective response to those challenges.

139. The segment had begun with a transition event linking the humanitarian and development sectors, during which concrete examples from Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic had illustrated how the New Way of Working could serve to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A major gap that had been identified was the need for pooled, flexible financing mechanisms to enable coherent planning and prioritization at the national level.

140. The High-Level Event on Famine Prevention and Response had highlighted the success that had so far been achieved in averting famine and the importance, in that regard, of the New Way of Working initiative. However, more funding and greater access were required. It was therefore imperative for donors to honour their financial pledges as soon as possible, and for the international community to address the underlying causes of famine and find political solutions.

141. It had been stressed, during the panel discussion on promoting respect for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, that non-compliance and a lack of access led to insufficient protection and assistance for people affected by armed conflict. The international legal framework had to be translated into action on the ground, with particular emphasis on training and awareness-raising. It was also crucial to create an environment for dialogue on international humanitarian law among States and with non-State actors, and for women to participate actively in the promotion of respect for international humanitarian law.

142. During the panel discussion on protracted crises, speakers had highlighted ongoing efforts in a number of countries to meet people's needs and systematically reduce risk and vulnerability. The adoption of the New Way of Working did not mean that the international community was casting aside its core responsibility to provide principled humanitarian assistance that saved lives and protected people in the most effective way. At the same time, there was a need to strengthen systems and normative frameworks that allowed people to care for themselves and build meaningful futures for their families and communities. Commitments to reduce risk and vulnerability must become the new normal, especially in protracted crises.

143. The panel discussion on disaster- and climate change-induced mobility had demonstrated that more actions were needed to build resilience and reduce the impact of disasters. Bringing together diverse expertise and resources, including from the private sector, was crucial, as were whole-of-community and whole-of-government approaches and the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement and the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda.

144. At the side events, emphasis had been placed on the crucial role of women's leadership in the humanitarian and development spheres, the changes needed to better address humanitarian crises in urban settings and practical ways of moving from the commitments made on localization through the Grand Bargain to a more efficient operational response.

145. During the general discussion, participants had considered ways to enhance responses to internal displacement and had noted the significant role of the Central Emergency Response Fund and country-based pooled funds in facilitating the provision of life-saving assistance to crisis-affected people. Donors were to be thanked for their strong and consistent support, but more was needed to achieve the necessary impact.

146. Together, everyone had laid a solid platform for delivering better humanitarian action to the most vulnerable people on the planet, which, for the international community, was both a desire and a duty.

147. **The President** said that, during the course of the humanitarian affairs segment, several themes had risen to prominence. He wished to touch upon five of them.

148. The first was the critical need for greater political and financial investment in prevention, including more risk-informed approaches to disaster management, conflict

prevention and mediation, and for continued investment in resilience-building and early warning and action.

149. The second was the need to address the staggering level of humanitarian need through new, innovative approaches and tools, and to improve the efficiency of the humanitarian system, including by fostering partnerships with, inter alia, the private sector.

150. The third was the importance of including local actors and women and girls in humanitarian action and of empowering them to serve as leaders and decision-makers. The improved collection and use of age- and gender-disaggregated data was crucial to enhancing humanitarian responses, as was taking into account the specific needs of marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities.

151. The fourth was the urgent need for political actors to use their influence to convince parties to conflicts to respect international humanitarian law. It was also important to promote safe and unimpeded humanitarian access, greater accountability for violations and respect for humanitarian principles.

152. The fifth was that, while donors had been incredibly generous in responding to humanitarian appeals, large funding gaps remained. Of particular importance were multi-year partnerships and an increase in flexible, unearmarked funding, while new partnerships with international financial institutions such as the World Bank were also vital.

153. To conclude, it was crucial that the discussions that had taken place during the humanitarian affairs segment continued and were translated into concrete actions that helped to alleviate suffering and both meet and reduce humanitarian needs.

Closing of the segment

154. After an exchange of courtesies, **the President** closed the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2017 session of the Council.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations E/2017/SR.39

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Summary record of the 39th meeting
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President: Mr. Barros Melet (Vice-President) ..... (Chile)

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Statement by the Secretary-General

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Mr. Barros Melet (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

1. **The President** invited the Council to resume its consideration of agenda item 7, entitled "Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation".

Statement by the Secretary-General

2. **The Secretary-General**, expressing gratitude for the hard work done by all his colleagues in the Secretariat as well as across the various agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to ensure the timely delivery of his report entitled "Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all" (A/72/124-E/2018/3), said that the reforms he envisioned were designed to serve Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. The 2030 Agenda was humanity's boldest agenda and would require equally bold changes to the United Nations development system. He had been tasked with putting forward proposals that matched the ambition needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; as the first step in that regard, the report was his offering for discussion on what he was convinced was the most ambitious yet realistic road map for change. It included 38 concrete ideas and actions to usher in a new era of strengthened implementation founded on leadership, cohesion, accountability and results. Such efforts did not solely concern what individual entities did alone, but also addressed what the United Nations system could and must do together to better support the efforts of Member States in implementing the transformative 2030 Agenda.

4. The United Nations development system had a proud history of delivering results. Across the decades, it had generated ideas and solutions that had changed the world for millions of the poorest and most vulnerable people on Earth. Flagship national policies and institutional reinforcement had been supported in many countries, thus making a profound difference in people's lives. The development system had made significant contributions to supporting countries in their pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, the most successful global anti-poverty effort in history.

5. Member States had been critical to producing the 2030 Agenda, the most ambitious anti-poverty and pro-planet agenda ever adopted by the United Nations. Yet, everyone knew that the development system was not functioning at its full potential: the United Nations was being held back by insufficient coordination and accountability on system-wide activities, and far too much of its work was rooted in the past rather than looking forward to the future. Urgent change was needed in order to ensure sustainable development, human rights and peace for generations to come. There was no time to lose.

6. The 2030 Agenda pointed the way and must become the defining agenda of the age, as it was the sole integrated platform to respond to the needs of people and Governments. The United Nations development system must therefore become far more integrated, more aligned, more effective and more intersectoral in its work. The world's shared goal was a twenty-first century United Nations development system that was focused more on people and less on processes, more on results for the poorest and the excluded and less on bureaucracy, more on integrated support for the 2030 Agenda and less on business as usual. That made it a collective responsibility to ask some deep and difficult questions about structures, skill sets and the architecture for action. After all, sustainable development was pivotal to the lives of every person, everywhere.

7. Sustainable development was a means to improve the lives of people, communities and societies without harming the planet. It was the most powerful tool for prevention: not only a route for advancing the realization of economic, cultural, social and political rights for all, but also for enabling global peace and security.

8. He had consequently made a very conscious decision to be as explicit as possible in his first report in the interest of full transparency, and to put concrete ideas on the table for discussion. The report was also an integral component of a broader reform agenda to strengthen the United Nations to better meet current complex and interlinked challenges. Those actions included reforming the peace and security architecture, giving adequate priority to prevention and sustaining peace; and reforming management, simplifying procedures and decentralizing decisions while enhancing transparency, efficiency and accountability. They also included clear strategies and actions to

achieve gender parity, end sexual exploitation and abuse, and strengthen counter-terrorism structures.

9. However, reform was difficult and not an end in itself. Reforms were undertaken while being keenly aware of the obligation to live up to the values of the Charter of the United Nations in the twenty-first century: ensuring that the system was better positioned to deliver for those who suffered most from poverty or exclusion and had been left behind without access to development, peace or respect for their rights and dignity. They looked to the United Nations with hope to better their lives.

10. In order to meet the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, extensive and inclusive consultations had been held with Member States and the United Nations system. An internal mechanism had been created for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Group to work together with transparency and accountability. Technical work had been initiated that drew on previous studies on accountability, transparency, coordination and oversight of the United Nations development system. Major work had been conducted with external experts to gather and analyse data on system-wide functions and capacities across the United Nations.

11. The proposals in the report thus reflected the leadership needed at the country level to help Member States achieve their goals, and the leadership needed at Headquarters to meet the ambition of the 2030 Agenda on the ground. Some proposals required further consultations while others could be set in motion immediately. He would continue to engage with Member States in the coming months before putting forward a more detailed report in December 2017.

12. He wished to outline eight guiding ideas. First, the United Nations development system must accelerate its transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the 2030 Agenda; there were major gaps in the system's current skill sets and mechanisms. The system was still set up to perform on a narrower set of goals that focused on certain sectors, rather than across the entire sustainable development agenda. Of course, the United Nations must be humble and could not do everything, everywhere. However, it must be able to provide advice, pool expertise and help Governments achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including by helping to convene the partners they required to take actions to scale. Better coordination, planning and accountability would provide the platform for United Nations country teams to transform overlaps into synergies and help Governments identify partners to bridge gaps.

13. Second, a much stronger focus was needed on financing for development. In order to meet the expectations of people and Governments that the United Nations system would help deliver on official development assistance and unlock doors to financing, expertise, know-how and technologies, the Organization must work with the private sector, international financial institutions and all other partners. The report envisioned a role for resident coordinator offices as country-level hubs supporting Governments in broadening their own resource bases, leveraging financing for development and mobilizing agency-specific expertise. A strengthened Department of Economic and Social Affairs would work in collaboration with regional commissions and the United Nations development system to provide the policy guidance and backing needed by resident coordinators and country teams to help Governments leverage financing.

14. Third, a new generation of country teams was needed that was tailored to the specific needs of each country. Country offices around the world had 18 agencies on average. The 2030 Agenda compelled the United Nations to move towards country teams that were leaner and more cohesive, flexible, efficient and focused in their scope. Teams must respond to evolving national priorities in an integrated, holistic way. That included the imperative of addressing the humanitarian-development nexus and its links with building and sustaining peace in a way that did not lead to a diversion of funds or a shift in focus from development to other objectives, while still preserving the autonomy of the humanitarian space. The old ways of working had been based on weak collective accountability, an approach that would not lead to transformative change in people's lives. It was important to make the most of the strengths of individual agencies while trying to achieve greater coherence, unity and accountability, including at the top. By December, specific criteria would be presented for consideration that might help to determine to the optimal United Nations configuration on a country-by-country basis.

15. Fourth, the ambiguity regarding the role of resident coordinators must be resolved. Currently, resident coordinators were expected to steer United Nations country team support at the national level, but had limited tools and no formal authority over other United Nations agencies and offices. To lead the new generation of country teams, resident coordinators must be well-staffed and supported with sufficient

resources, and have direct supervisory lines over all country team members on system-wide responsibilities. Members would naturally preserve reporting lines to their headquarters in the exercise of their respective mandates. With greater authority must also come greater accountability. Those were two sides of the same coin. Consultations and analysis pointed to the value of delinking the functions of the resident coordinators from those of the resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), while ensuring continued access to the substantive policy support, operational tools and joint financing they needed. The current firewall between those two functions could not guarantee the level of impartiality needed for resident coordinators to generate confidence and lead effectively. The reporting lines from the resident coordinators to the Secretary-General would need to be clarified and strengthened, while increasing accountability to Member States for system-wide development results.

16. He wished to be crystal clear that sustainable development must be the DNA of resident coordinators. Resident coordinators must be capable of steering and overseeing the development system's substantive contribution to the 2030 Agenda, in line with national priorities and needs. They must also, however, be able to take a broader view and lead integrated analysis and planning processes, which had significant implications for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, resident coordinators must support Governments in crisis prevention efforts that focused on building resilience and anticipating shocks that could undermine progress, whether from climate change, natural hazards or the risk of conflict. To successfully implement the 2030 Agenda, the resident coordinator function must remain anchored in the operational system for development and be firmly connected to the country level and with UNDP as a key driver for development. More specific proposals regarding the resident coordinator system would be presented by December.

17. Fifth, for too long, reform efforts in the field had been hindered by a lack of similar efforts at Headquarters. To enable change on the ground, an accountability mechanism was needed at Headquarters that was seen as impartial and neutral, without creating new bureaucracies or superstructures. To address that long-standing issue, he intended to assume his full responsibilities as Chief Executive of the United Nations and reassert a leadership role in the Organization's sustainable development efforts in support of Member States and staff on the ground. He was asking the Deputy Secretary-General to oversee and provide strategic guidance to the United Nations Development Group, and to lead a steering committee to foster coherence between humanitarian action and development work. Decentralization was a key goal of all his reform efforts. Effective decentralization would require strengthening accountability at Headquarters, while always maintaining a focus on delivery on the ground.

18. Sixth, a more cohesive United Nations policy voice must be fostered at the regional level. A review of regional representation and activities would be launched to clarify the division of labour within the system and explore ways to reinforce the policy backbone at the country, regional and global levels.

19. Seventh, the accountability of the United Nations development system was a matter of priority. Accountability was an end in itself. It fostered transparency, improved results and held institutions to agreed standards and commitments. It was also a critical incentive for collaboration and better reporting on system-wide impact. The report identified three specific areas for continued engagement with Member States: improving guidance and oversight over system-wide results, with the Economic and Social Council at the centre; more transparency around collective results, including through system-wide annual reporting and the establishment of a system-wide independent evaluation function; and more robust internal accountability to ensure that internal mechanisms such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the United Nations Development Group delivered on the mandates of Member States as well as internal agreements.

20. Eighth and finally, there was a critical need to address the unintended funding consequences that had hampered the ability of the United Nations to deliver as one. Around 85 per cent of all funds were currently earmarked, of which approximately 90 per cent were earmarked to single-donor, single-agency programmes. A fragmented funding base was delivering a fragmented system and undermining results in people's lives. He therefore wished to explore the possibility of a funding compact, through which the system would commit to greater efficiency, value-for-money and reporting on system-wide results, based on the prospect of more robust core funding support to individual agencies and improved joint funding practices.

21. The true test of reform would not be measured in words in New York or Geneva. It would be measured through tangible results in the lives of the people served by the United Nations. The report outlined areas where ambitious but realistic changes could be

implemented without creating unnecessary disruption on the ground. It also reflected his previous experience as head of a major United Nations operational agency. His decade as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had given him first-hand experience of the system's strengths and the challenges of inter-agency collaboration. He had seen the need to preserve adequate levels of autonomy to ensure flexible and efficient delivery, in line with the specific mandates that needed to be implemented. During many field visits, however, he had repeatedly heard from colleagues and partners that the United Nations must do far better in working together to deliver a system that produced results for people. Many questions raised in the report still required further consideration; answers would be sought in collaboration with Member States, as repositioning the United Nations development system was a shared responsibility.

22. Just as the founders of the Organization had looked into the future when they had shaped and adopted the Charter of the United Nations, there was now a collective responsibility to invest in the United Nations of tomorrow and in the world it wished to see in 2030 and beyond. He was convinced that the bold steps that the 2030 Agenda required, and which humanity deserved, could be taken together.

23. **Mr. Moustapha** (Chad), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group would attentively review the contents of the report and provide objective feedback at a later date. Throughout the process of consultations on the report, the Group had always expressed its support for the implementation of the important mandates arising from General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations development system. That included a systematic review to support the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For the Group, the following were the key elements of such a review: supporting the efforts of African countries to implement the Agenda at the national and regional levels; taking into account African priorities and the needs of African countries in special situations; building on achievements, establishing forums for sharing information and best practices, including regarding technology transfer, and improving the quality of data for Member States; strengthening the presence of the United Nations at the national level and also strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa; enhancing cooperation between Member States and the African Union and its regional economic commissions; and, most importantly, finding new financing source and establishing suitable resource mobilization strategies.

24. While Member States might express different viewpoints and priorities with regard to the United Nations development system, General Assembly resolution 71/243 provided sufficient inspiration and guidance for consensus to be reached. The United Nations development system must provide qualitative support to all States, particularly African States to achieve "the future we want".

25. **Mr. Skoog** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that the reform of the United Nations development system repositioned sustainable development at the heart of its work, while focusing on prevention and sustaining peace, and identifying the root causes of conflict and vulnerability. The report presented a good vision to achieve the 2030 Agenda and ensure coherent delivery through strengthened and accountable leadership. Although the report referred specifically to the United Nations development system, the Nordic countries underlined the importance of linking all reform initiatives, as management, peace, security and development were interdependent and true reform would require an integrated approach.

26. The Nordic countries supported system-wide reforms that encompassed a number of important cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, adequate financing and accountability. However, they wished to focus on three areas of particular interest. First, the in-country delivery of joined-up work by a new generation of country teams would act as the litmus test for all new reforms. Development efforts must maintain a clear focus on the main beneficiaries in the field and the United Nations development system must always adopt a contextual presence and country-specific response. Second, gender parity must be achieved in nominations and, more broadly, the gender perspective must be mainstreamed in all aspects of the development system, both normative and operational. Third, financing reform to overcome current funding issues would be crucial to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The Nordic countries emphasized the importance of core funding, which allowed for the flexibility requested in the report. Sweden and Norway had committed to delivering 1 per cent of their gross national income as development aid. The Nordic countries looked forward to contributing to the funding compact suggested in the report.

27. **Ms. Zahir** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that as the report had been circulated before a holiday

weekend, the Alliance was unable to provide in-depth feedback as a group. It would review the report and hoped for another opportunity to discuss its recommendations in the near future. As small island developing States were greatly dependent on the United Nations development system to implement the 2030 Agenda, the Alliance looked forward to future dialogue on the repositioning of the development system for greater effectiveness.

28. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Observer for Bangladesh), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that the Group could not provide detailed feedback because the report had been distributed before a holiday weekend. The Group was still examining the report's recommendations and hoped to engage in a fruitful discussion in the coming weeks and months.

29. The elements captured in the report were timely and vitally important for the least developed countries. A stronger United Nations was necessary to ensure the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, drawing on a stronger resource base, especially core funding, efficient and skilled human resources and transparent, accountable business practices.

30. His delegation had taken note of the recommendations regarding the reporting structures of United Nations country teams and the new supervisory role outlined for the Deputy Secretary-General. It was necessary to further consider how the accountability of the United Nations country teams and the resident coordinator system could be strengthened with regard to host countries as well as intergovernmental processes. Continued decline in programmatic support to the least developed countries remained a major concern that must be addressed, preferably by establishing a United Nations system-wide benchmark for the allocation of programmatic resources to the least developed countries.

31. While working to reposition the United Nations development system, it was necessary to remember that recent statistics showed that a business as usual approach would still leave 35 per cent of the population of least developed countries in extreme poverty by 2030. In that regard, the Group supported the funding compact suggested by the Secretary-General. The compact should not only focus on enhanced funding, but also on leveraging available funding in a more predictable fashion. Lastly, the physical presence of the United Nations system at the country level remained highly important for least developed countries and should be further enhanced.

32. **Mr. Rycroft** (United Kingdom) said that extreme poverty, conflict and humanitarian crises were closely interlinked; as a result, more people needed the United Nations development system than ever before. Too many people were currently being failed by a system that must be urgently reformed.

33. A reformed United Nations must be at the heart of an effective, rules-based international system that could prevent and resolve conflict, help countries to develop sustainably, respond to humanitarian crises, and build and sustain peace. In short, the United Nations must be allowed to live up to its full potential. There was an unprecedented demand for multilateral responses to global challenges and the international system must evolve to meet them. Millions of people currently relied on a development system whose processes and institutions had been established over 50 years ago. Member States now had a duty to refocus and reorganize that system.

34. He welcomed the strong vision of reform contained in the report, including concrete proposals and repeated emphasis on leadership, effectiveness, accountability and performance. The United Kingdom would continue to be the second largest donor to the United Nations development system. However, the international community must now go beyond the status quo and adopt bold and ambitious reforms, of which the report was merely the first step.

35. **Mr. Lauber** (Observer for Switzerland) said that his delegation welcomed the report, as it reflected the ambitions and expectations that had been repeatedly expressed by Member States, including during the consultations on the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The 2030 Agenda would require genuine changes in working methods that emphasized collective results, greater accountability and revamped leadership at the country, regional and headquarters levels. Reform of the United Nations development system must go hand in hand with reforms of the Organization's management and administration, and a strengthened focus on the humanitarian-development nexus and its linkages to peace and security.

36. The recommendations contained in the report were ambitious, especially those suggesting the delinking of the functions of resident coordinators from UNDP resident representatives and the use of a system-wide strategic document for all intervention countries. They were also necessary to make the United Nations development system more coherent, collaborative and effective. In the context of the reform of the United Nations development system, all Member States must adapt their positions and working methods,

especially with regard to financing. His delegation appreciated the suggestion of a funding compact as well as the progressive merging of the governing boards of New York-based funds and programmes. It looked forward to receiving more detailed proposals from the Secretary-General before the end of the year.

37. **Mr. Minami** (Japan) said that his delegation welcomed the emphasis on prevention and the creation of synergies in the report, which contained concrete and ambitious suggestions for the United Nations to deliver better results on the ground. The operationalization of the humanitarian-development nexus, in particular, was a long-standing issue that should be addressed. While the intention of reforming the resident coordinator system was also welcome, that matter must be further examined owing to associated legal and financial issues. More information was also needed on how the larger role envisioned for the Deputy Secretary-General, while welcome, would affect her current role as the second highest-ranking United Nations official.

38. The call for improved governance and oversight was supported, but further discussion was needed on whether the three options presented in the report would be truly conducive to that end. Similarly, in-depth discussions should be held on the issue of funding, based on the consensus views expressed at previous forums and also respecting the realities on the ground of each Member State.

39. His delegation was interested in the proposals to ensure a clear division of labour between the regional economic commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. However, such efforts must be implemented in an effective and efficient manner without adding more bureaucratic layers.

40. Lastly, his delegation wished to know the process for submitting more detailed comments prior to the issuance of the follow-up report of the Secretary-General in December.

41. **Mr. Meyer** (Brazil), welcoming the efforts made by the Office of the Secretary-General to engage with all Member States during consultations, said that it would take time to consider the report's specific recommendations within the Group of 77 and China, to which it belonged. However, the basic assumptions contained in the report were a good reflection of the purpose of General Assembly resolution 71/243 and the nature of the 2030 Agenda.

42. The United Nations development system should support countries in fulfilling any unfinished business regarding the Millennium Development Goals, while also promoting the more innovative Sustainable Development Goals by developing new forms of expertise and addressing the full range of development challenges, both old and new. His delegation therefore appreciated the emphasis placed on strengthening the policy backbone of the development system by leveraging its unique combination of normative legitimacy and operational reach, as well as policy integration, knowledge exchange and the transfer of technology.

43. In order for the United Nations development system to be relevant for all developing countries, it must adopt a multidimensional approach to poverty and other development challenges whilst still paying special attention to the most vulnerable countries. National ownership and leadership should be reinforced, and country-level delivery should function as a litmus test for success. His delegation would appreciate further discussions on how to improve and better coordinate capacity-development activities.

44. **Ms. Wilson** (Australia) said that the international community was facing multiple and complex challenges. Much as Member States had worked together to create the United Nations over 70 years earlier, they must now revitalize their shared institution to face those common challenges. Her delegation would therefore first look for solutions and structures that recognized that the world had changed. The world's citizens expected a modern and efficient United Nations that also recognized its role to leverage and inspire transformative change with others, including Member States, civil society, business and philanthropy. Engagement with all of those groups was the only pathway to success. Australia would also seek changes that empowered leadership and performance, incentivized excellence everywhere and provided plans and mechanisms to address underperformance. Furthermore, holistic solutions were needed that focused on rewarding proven performance and interconnections between governance and finance, and effectiveness and results. Lastly, reforms should promote transparency as the currency of trust and diversity as a source of strength. Australia looked forward to playing its part in the reform process.

45. **Mr. Tommo Monthe** (Cameroon) said that the report was very timely, since the key question was whether the United Nations system, together with Member States and other partners, was fit for purpose to implement the 2030 Agenda. The report had tried to answer that question with regard to the United Nations.

46. Cameroon welcomed the overall vision contained in the report, including the proposals concerning the

Deputy Secretary-General, the regional commissions and the resident coordinator system. His delegation also highly appreciated the idea of a funding compact, since trillions of dollars would be needed to implement the 2030 Agenda. The report to be issued in December must provide more information on the compact and establish the annual amount needed for each country and region, the nature of those resources and the timing for their use. However, other resources such as technology, research and innovation and partnerships would also be needed, and the final report must indicate how Member States, especially weaker or smaller ones, could access them. Technology, research and innovation were often inaccessible owing to intellectual property restrictions, and partnerships were formed on a very selective basis.

47. Lastly, regarding the talent pool, the United Nations system had some excellent senior staff, but it would be necessary to redeploy some and recruit others. The Secretary-General's report on management must specify how much it would cost to retrain staff or recruit new personnel. His delegation looked forward to reviewing all the supplementary reports on management, resources and related issues, which should be considered together. The year 2030 was fast approaching and the reform process would need to be completed very soon in order for the Agenda to be implemented on time.

48. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan) said that her delegation had not had much time to review the report in detail, but would make some preliminary comments. Pakistan fully supported the principal objective of the review, which was to ensure that the United Nations development system was well positioned to comprehensively and sustainably support implementation of the 2030 Agenda. General Assembly resolution 71/243 provided the necessary framework for that reform. The review was a fundamental component of the Secretary-General's reform initiative, which included examination of the peace and security architecture and internal management reform, all of which was supported by Pakistan. A clear path must be set out for consulting Member States during the preparation of the final report to be issued in December.

49. Her Government agreed that sustainable development built resilience and sustained peace, and that a durable peace enabled sustainable development. However, an overemphasis on prevention in the development context could fundamentally change the nature of the United Nations development system; maintaining its focus on development was therefore vital.

50. Addressing the growing imbalance between core and non-core financing would be crucial. The report proposed a modest approach in dealing with the gaps in Sustainable Development Goal coverage, which was a concern. The development system should have the necessary capacity and resources to assist countries in comprehensively achieving the Goals. At the regional level, the review by the Secretary-General would help to clarify the division of labour within the system but regional diversity should be factored in, as well as respective priorities.

51. Pakistan welcomed the assigning of comprehensive responsibilities in sustainable development to the Deputy Secretary-General and the creation of a redesigned Sustainable Development Goal unit and an executive committee to promote integrated decision-making. The appointment of the Deputy Secretary-General as Chair of the United Nations Development Group would undoubtedly enhance the accountability of the United Nations development system. On strengthening the accountability of the development system to Member States, the comprehensive approach proposed by the Secretary-General would require careful assessment.

52. **Ms. Velichko** (Observer for Belarus) said that UNDP played a key role in the United Nations development system and that the UNDP office in Belarus was working effectively. In connection with the planned reform, she wondered whether there had been any assessment of country office problems that would justify UNDP apparently losing its priority role.

53. Belarus wished to hear more about the mechanism for appointing resident coordinators, since the proposed mechanism would increase the number of participants approving candidates and did not take account of the role of the State to which the resident coordinator would be appointed.

54. Her delegation wondered what the future role of States would be in the reform of the United Nations development system and how the interests of States would be taken into consideration in preparing the Secretary-General's subsequent report for submission in December. The current briefing should not merely be a box-ticking exercise.

55. It was not clear from the report whether the reduction in the number of country offices was part of the "Delivering as one" initiative, under which all offices would report to the resident coordinator, or whether it was part of a reduction solely in the number of UNDP offices. Reform, especially of such an important part of the work of the United Nations as development, should not lead to poor performance by

country offices or to additional difficulties on the ground for recipient countries. States should also play a key role in that process.

58. **Mr. Gómez Camacho** (Observer for Mexico) said that dialogue with Member States was vital to making progress. The report was full of common sense and pragmatism, and Mexico was in complete agreement with the eight guiding ideas outlined in the Secretary-General's statement and understood that they only made sense as a whole.

59. However, his delegation wished to mention two well-known but unresolved issues. The first was bureaucracy. Just like any other bureaucracy, the United Nations system was not designed to transform itself. Indeed, institutions usually worked in the opposite direction, and the United Nations was no exception. Strong leadership by the Secretary-General that provided a clear direction was therefore essential and he must be supported by Member States in that endeavour. The institutional complexity of the United Nations, which had developed rather arbitrarily over many years, made his job even harder. The system's incentives needed to be overhauled, since they were contributing to the development of silos and to decreased collaboration.

60. The second issue concerned the Member States themselves. Their inertias, fears and interests or perceived interests often led to a dialogue among themselves that was not necessarily conducive to the reform they desired, quite possibly the opposite. Common sense, ambition and diplomacy would be required, and Member States would need to assume their responsibilities in that regard, since 50 per cent of the process depended on them.

59. As mentioned in the report, around 85 per cent of funds were earmarked, yet earmarking often produced great distortions in the Organization's mandates. That was another area in which common sense and commitment were needed from Member States, which should reflect on their interests in the Organization and make the necessary political decisions in order to take the process forward.

60. **Mr. Krapp** (Germany) said that, although there had not been much time to review the report, it was bold and visionary and contained unusually concrete recommendations. He welcomed the way the report was framed, since it showed the level of leadership the development system required in order to unlock its full potential to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. Germany strongly supported the effort to bring about meaningful change and stood ready to support the reform agenda. The report was based on the analysis of capacities and functions requested by Member States in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The effort to address gaps and overlaps, and to clarify the division of labour between United Nations entities, was particularly appreciated.

61. The United Nations development system must become fit for purpose in order to be able to make a substantial contribution to implementation of the 2030 Agenda and better meet the world's complex and interlinked challenges. There was an unprecedented demand for multilateral responses to global challenges, and the international system must evolve in order to keep pace. The proposed reform agenda was therefore welcome. Funding could be a powerful driver of coherence but also of fragmentation. His delegation therefore requested more information on the funding compact, the details of which should be worked out in close cooperation with Member States.

62. The report was one piece of the complex puzzle that constituted reform of the United Nations development system. The ambition shown in the report was much appreciated and the development system required and deserved that the same level of ambition be sustained over the coming months.

63. **Mr. Kononchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the report had unfortunately caused his delegation more concern than hope for the future of the United Nations development system. For the most part, the conclusions and recommendations contained therein went beyond the mandates agreed by Member States in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development. There was clearly an attempt to weaken Member States' control over the development system and to overlook the principle of national ownership.

64. In General Assembly resolution 71/243, Governments had agreed to strengthen the transparency, coherence and accountability of the United Nations development system, but there had been no mention of a complete overhaul. In that context, the Russian Federation was seriously concerned by the recommendation concerning the humanitarian-development nexus and the imposition of the new way of working, which had not been agreed at the intergovernmental level. Furthermore, the attempt to introduce conflict prevention into the work of the development system was inappropriate and ran counter to the first guiding principle of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

65. There was insufficient justification for the establishment of a steering committee or an independent evaluation office anchored in the

Executive Office of the Secretary-General. The review was intended to increase accountability and effective interaction among existing offices and Member States, and to establish transparent and clear working methods. It should not generate more bureaucracy or further complicate the organizational structure. He questioned the staffing and budgetary implications of taking those steps and why coordination and evaluation issues could not be deal with by existing entities such as the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Joint Inspection Unit.

66. The report highlighted gaps in the contribution of the United Nations development system to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6, on clean water and sanitation, Goal 7, on affordable and clean energy, Goal 9, on industry, innovation and infrastructure, Goal 12, on responsible consumption and production, and Goal 13, on climate action. However, the report contained no substantive recommendations in that regard. At the same time, persistent attempts were being made to impose on the development system work that was related to human rights and sustaining peace.

67. His delegation also wished to highlight the unjustified expansion of Secretariat's authority. Although there was no mandate for such action in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the lion's share of the report consisted of recommendations in that regard. The recommendations to transfer of chairmanship of the United Nations Development Group to the Deputy Secretary-General, to reconfigure country teams and to transform resident coordinators into political actors would increase centralized management within the development system. That would essentially undermine the neutral and universal nature of the current decision-making mechanism and obviate the need for Member States' approval through the creation of a legal instrument to endorse politically motivated standards of operational activities.

68. The fundamental principle of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was national ownership in the area of sustainable development, not only in the definition of national development priorities, strategies and policies but also in related issues such as establishing country teams and their methods for cooperating with Governments and also formulating their ultimate objectives, including within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

69. The review had also reaffirmed that the resident coordinator system was owned by the United Nations development system as a whole, meaning that any potential changes to resident coordinator profiles or amendments to selection and evaluation processes should be considered and approved by Member States solely by consensus. Disregarding that principle could have dire consequences, even leading to a complete breakdown of trust by programme countries.

70. Proposed innovations at the Headquarters level were also questionable, particularly the effectiveness and legitimacy of merging the governing bodies of New York-based funds and programmes.

71. The review had unambiguously intended to strengthen the transparency and responsiveness of the United Nations development system and its accountability to Member States. For States, the development system was a neutral, objective and trusted partner, not a conduit of norms and standards that were convenient to a limited number of interested components within the system. It had been expected from the report that the development system would strengthen the profile of partnerships.

72. The report did not take into account the actual service needs of recipient countries. Its conclusions were mostly speculative, disrupted the fragile balance achieved and went beyond the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the sustainable development pillar in general. It was doubtful whether such a controversial vision could be used to guide improvements in the work of the development system.

73. **Mr. Blanchard** (Observer for Canada) said that the report fully reflected the vision on breaking down silos that the Secretary-General had set out both before and after his appointment.

74. His own experience over the past year with two country teams, in Haiti and Sierra Leone, had made clear to him the importance of enhancing the role and authority of the resident coordinator. However, the difficulty would possibly lie in the extent of the resident coordinator's ability to comment on, coordinate and allocate human and material resources among the agencies. The country team in Haiti had so far concentrated on security issues and humanitarian action, but its focus was shifting towards development, which would require different talents and resources, even if they were provided by some of the same agencies. The proposal constituted something of a revolution within the United Nations system and Canada wished to encourage the Secretary-General to continue to work in that direction since it would otherwise be difficult to make progress in the breaking down of silos.

75. It was very positive that the matter of the talent pool had been accorded such a high priority. When putting forward candidates, Member States needed to think about the expertise required. Many of the skills required for the future were different from those of the past and if the United Nations was irrelevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda then the Organization would fail.

76. Regarding the issue of resources and partnerships and the role of the Department of Social and Economic Affairs, the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations Global Compact, the report was clearly only a first step but a great deal of work needed to be done in the area of financing and mobilizing resources for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. To date, the Global Compact had focused on norm-setting but less so on mobilizing resources and financing, which was a shift and would require different skills. The Group of Friends on Sustainable Development Goal Financing had also looked at the same issue over the past six months; it was very clear that different partnerships were needed with the multilateral banks and the United Nations and the country teams, which would take integration and coordination at the United Nations to a new level. He invited the Secretary-General to go even further than the action proposed in his report. While it was vital that the United Nations remained relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it was also urgent that financing be scaled up. There was no magic bullet, only a series of initiatives and platforms that needed to be created.

77. **Ms. Amadeo** (United States of America) said that her delegation appreciated the consultative approach taken in seeking input from Member States and other members of the development system and believed the report was a considerable step in the right direction for reform of the United Nations development system. The United States strongly supported the reform effort and had been at the forefront of negotiations on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, urging a bold and comprehensive overview of the development system in order to ensure that the Organization was ready to meet the complex challenges of the twenty-first century and that it recognized and acted upon the interlinked nature of the world's humanitarian, development and sustaining peace challenges. A review of gaps and overlaps in development system capacities, an outline of options to improve coordination among development system entities and consideration of Member States' oversight were critical to achieving that goal.

78. Her delegation welcomed the report's identification of the need for better coordination at Headquarters and at the country-team level among agencies working on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The current coordination mechanisms could no longer meet the demands of contemporary agendas and must be improved. It also appreciated the recognition that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions were in need of reform. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals had provided a key opportunity to reform the structure of the Secretariat to refocus on outcomes and impact. The United States urged the Secretary-General to look at ways to streamline and reduce costs and reporting in order to seize on efficiencies, which would reduce overlap and costly redundancies.

79. **Mr. Wu** Haitao (China) said that his delegation supported the central role of the United Nations in promoting collective development and maintaining world peace. The United Nations development system should be repositioned around the comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Support to developing countries should be increased in areas where it was most urgently needed so that those countries could develop in a manner consistent with their national conditions and their own choices. The principles of national ownership and leadership should be respected, and the tasks of poverty reduction and economic development in developing countries should be prioritized. His delegation had taken note of the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General, and hoped that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would take a more active role in policy coordination for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

80. With regard to the resources of the United Nations system, North-South cooperation was still the main channel for official development assistance; South-South cooperation served as a complement thereto and strengthened development partnerships. The work of the United Nations development system was wide-ranging and influential. With that in mind, the Chinese delegation would study the report with care, and looked forward to engaging in discussions with all parties. The views and recommendations of Member States, especially developing countries, should be taken into account in order to achieve consensus on the reform of the development system. At the same time, it was necessary to improve the analysis and assessment of reform measures and forecast their impacts, both positive and negative.

81. His Government was prepared to work with all parties towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and to assist all countries,

particularly developing countries, in their development.

82. **Mr. Morales López** (Colombia) said that the report presented an accurate assessment of the development system and proposed feasible solutions. Although only preliminary, the report proposed practical steps and changes that were urgently needed to increase transparency and accountability. In particular, it recognized that General Assembly resolution 71/243 was being implemented and acknowledged the value of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. Only by reviewing the mandates and activities undertaken in the area of sustainable development would it be possible to develop an overarching vision of the system and determine countries' specific needs for implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

83. Colombia particularly welcomed the priority given to achieving gender parity among the resident coordinators, as well as the report's new vision of the work of the country teams and the resident coordinator. However, it was important to continue to identify gaps and ways to increase coherence and synergies and reduce overlap, so that progress could be made towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Colombia was confident that, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General, the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the regional commissions and the United Nations development system would be carried out more efficiently and more opportunities for financing for development would be generated.

84. The report had highlighted the importance of strengthening the interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and sustaining peace. The development system should undertake specific work in conflict or post-conflict contexts to ensure the achievement of a stable and lasting peace together with true sustainable development.

85. **Mr. Teo** Choon Heng (Observer for Singapore) said that his delegation had had limited time to review the report, but wished to convey its strong support for the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General in their efforts to reform the United Nations and make it fit for purpose to deliver as one on the 2030 Agenda; it urged them to be ambitious and pledged its commitment to work with them to advance the reform process.

86. He welcomed the report's emphasis on accountability and transparency. As a small State, Singapore attached importance to an effective rules-based multilateral system, and believed the ideas presented were a step in the right direction. It also welcomed the report's candid assessment and acknowledgement of the gaps in the United Nations development system. However, the key question was how those gaps should be addressed and, in particular, how the development system could be strengthened to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda by small island developing States. His Government urged the Secretary-General to give priority to that issue and place more emphasis on strengthening the United Nations development system in order to provide better support to vulnerable countries. It was also positive that the report had identified gaps in addressing some of the Sustainable Development Goals, since no Goals must be left behind in the quest to leave no one behind.

87. His delegation wished to see greater synergies with other reform processes, in particular with management reform initiatives and the efforts to enhance the talent pool of the Secretariat. In that context, his Government welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to align the three pillars of reform to ensure that the processes collectively strengthened the ability of the United Nations to perform better. The role of the Deputy Secretary-General was critical to ensuring that the focus on development was not lost in the drive to reform the United Nations system. Reform should not be an end in itself, rather a means of ensuring that the United Nations was better able to deliver on its agenda and its many mandates.

88. **Ms. Bahous** (Observer for Jordan) said that her delegation welcomed the reform process, and supported the Secretary-General's vision and leadership in responding to the demands of a new development agenda. The process must succeed, since increased coherence, accountability and transparency were needed to achieve the right results on the ground.

89. To strengthen the development system, it was vital to emphasize the humanitarian-development nexus and its linkages to building and sustaining peace and security, and also to prevention, without diverting focus and funds from development. The new way of working must focus on collective outcomes at the country level. National ownership and leadership therefore remained paramount, and it was important to strengthen the resident coordinator system and the resident coordinator's authority in that direction, in particular by building new skill sets and changing mindsets.

90. National plans should guide the coordination between operational activities for development and humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts, but it was also important to pay close attention to regional mechanisms and to clarify the division of labour within

the system. Effective communication would be needed to ensure the eight guiding ideas were understood and embraced by all. Regarding the fragmentation of funding, Jordan welcomed and fully supported the recommendation to work on a funding compact and believed that a change in the funding architecture may be needed at all levels.

91. **Mr. Chandrtri** (Observer for Thailand) said that his delegation welcomed the analysis in the report on ways to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations development system in order to foster and support South-South and triangular cooperation, including through the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. It also welcomed the recognition that regional commissions should play a greater role in contributing to sustainable development.

92. Regarding changes to the resident coordinator system, it was crucial for resident coordinators to work in close consultation with programme countries on the ground in line with their national development priorities. The repositioning of the United Nations development system must leave no one behind and support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by all Member States.

93. **Mr. Sevilla Borja** (Observer for Ecuador) said that the report presented by the Secretary-General broke with tradition by not remaining a merely technical exercise: it proposed a new political vision to reform the United Nations. He commended both the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for undertaking an inclusive process of consultations to produce the report.

94. The report was based on two key elements: the information provided by the Joint Inspection Unit and a review of the functions and responsibilities of the United Nations development system. Although his delegation had not yet been able to analyse the report in depth, either individually or as the Chair of the Group of 77 and China, it did have some preliminary observations to make with a view to the issuance of the final report in December.

95. First, when discussing poverty and equality, the report should provide specific statistics regarding inequality. Second, although mentioned was made that 65 million people were currently displaced, it should be specified that many of those individuals had been displaced by foreign occupation, colonialism and illegal military interventions. Third, while the report referred to various international instruments that provided a clear road map to face the challenges ahead, a more exhaustive list should mention other agreements such as the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

96. Noting that there were only 13 years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, he said that failure to achieve the Goals would cause future generations to lose trust in the United Nations.

97. Lastly, he recalled that the United Nations presence on the ground served to support the national policies of countries striving to implement the 2030 Agenda and not to impose foreign political philosophies.

98. **Ms. Bogyay** (Observer for Hungary) said that her delegation supported the report's objective of reviewing the current functions and capacities of the United Nations development system in order to improve overall coordination and identify gaps, overlaps and challenges. Hungary had called for greater accountability, transparency and oversight for many years; the 2030 Agenda offered a golden opportunity to make the development system fit for purpose. Input from Member States should play an important role in the preparation of the second report to be circulated in December.

99. While it would be possible to build on existing functions and mechanisms, the ambitious scope of the 2030 Agenda would require scaled-up coherence and efficiency. Her delegation wished to support all initiatives that emphasized transparency, action and better systemic coordination.

100. She wondered what kinds of solutions were possible to address gaps in thematic coverage of the water-related Sustainable Development Goals, as mentioned in paragraph 51 of the report. In the area of human trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation and other forms of modern slavery, coherence between the actions of the various United Nations entities must be enhanced and linked to the areas of conflict prevention and counter-terrorism.

101. **Mr. Parenti** (Observer for the European Union) welcomed the eight guidelines in the report as concrete ideas for implementation and a genuine effort to ensure that the United Nations could deliver as one.

102. **The Secretary-General** expressed his gratitude to the 25 delegations that had taken the floor for their important contributions to the discussion and said that he would respectfully attempt to respond to all of them while being conscious of the limited time.

103. Responding to the delegation of Chad, he said that the true litmus test of the 2030 Agenda would be its degree of success in Africa, alongside that of

Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, adopted by the African Union. He agreed with all the objectives set out by the Group of African countries. The priorities of the African continent were essential, and the United Nations development system would continue to work with the African Union and other subregional organizations, which provided essential support for the success of Member States in overcoming the enormous development challenges that still existed.

104. Expressing his agreement with the points made by the delegation of Sweden, he said that, ideally, country contributions to financing would be provided early, unearmarked and without conditions, much as Sweden had usually done during his time as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. While it was not possible for that model to become the standard across the board for all Member States, it was essential to move in that direction.

105. He assured the Maldivian delegation that small island developing States remained a key priority and that he understood the concerns expressed about their inadequate representation within the United Nations system. Efforts would be made to rationalize the support provided to small island States. He also welcomed the emphasis that the delegation had placed on transparency.

106. Responding to the delegation of Bangladesh, he underlined the central question of accountability to host countries, which was one of the most important aspects for reforming the country teams and strengthening the resident coordinator system. Conditions must be created for ownership to be effective and for all agencies to be able to cooperate with a single objective in mind, namely responding to the priorities defined by Governments.

107. He agreed that there must be multilateral responses to global challenges, and looked forward to the contribution that the United Kingdom Secretary of State for International Development would make to the debate. He likewise agreed with the comments made by the delegation of Switzerland, especially regarding the need to guarantee collective work and results within the United Nations development system.

108. The delegation of Japan had asked about the way forward. As soon as the high-level political forum on sustainable development ended, a work plan would be presented for interaction within the United Nations system, and also with Member States in the context of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in order to achieve a final report that was not only a product of internal analysis but also a reflection of Member States' concerns. With regard to the doubt expressed concerning the new role of the Deputy Secretary-General, he said that the coordination of the United Nations development system had been enshrined as the primary responsibility of the Deputy Secretary-General by a General Assembly resolution. The reforms being undertaken thus merely sought to reflect the intentions of a General Assembly resolution.

109. He expressed full agreement with the observations made by the delegation of Brazil, especially concerning the need to strengthen the policy backbone of the United Nations development system, which was linked to the various reforms envisioned for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the regional commissions and the role played by UNDP.

110. Commenting on the remarks made by the delegation of Australia, he said that transparency was essential for trust; unfortunately, trust was still a problem within the United Nations system, as well as amongst Member States. He would do everything possible to guarantee it.

111. In response to the delegation of Cameroon, it was highlighted that the concept of being fit for purpose applied to the whole United Nations system, as well as to Member States and other partners. The level of details regarding technology and resources requested by the delegation in the final report would unfortunately not be possible on a country-by-country basis, but efforts would be made to provide more concrete details.

112. He welcomed the emphasis placed by the delegation of Pakistan on the need to be more development-focused. Development was crucial to the work of the United Nations as a whole, although it was obviously linked to other aspects. Resources would not be diverted from development. More discussion would be needed regarding how best to fill the existing gaps.

113. Reassuring the delegation of Belarus, he said that resident coordinators could not be appointed without the agreement of Member States. Moreover, the role of resident coordinators was not a politicized one; on the contrary, he sought to increase the accountability of country teams to Member States. There was no intention to reduce the role of UNDP within the system and it would continue to provide central support to resident coordinators and other system elements. The report clearly stated that UNDP would become the integrator platform for the contribution of different United Nations agencies in support of the resident coordinator system.

114. As the delegation of Mexico had underlined, it was necessary to embrace common sense and

pragmatism, working together to change the traditional working methods of institutions that were highly resistant to change. Mutual trust would create the conditions for success. It was true that a highly earmarked budget inevitably led to a distortion of priorities.

115. Responding to the delegation of Germany, he said that he hoped that the proposals contained in the report were sufficiently concrete and ambitious. The intention had been for the interim report to serve its purpose by at least discussing all of the key questions and providing some concrete proposals. Further discussions could then be held to address the issues raised. In that context, he underscored the importance of the next Group of 20 meeting, especially in relation to Africa, education and other concerns expressed by the German delegation. He welcomed the linkages that had been established between the Group of 20 and the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 2030 Agenda more generally, as a very important development.

116. Expressing gratitude to the delegation of the Russian Federation for its sincere and open remarks, he explained that there were always two possible interpretations of any text. The Russian Federation appeared to believe that the proposals contained in the report went beyond the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and were aimed at politicizing and centralizing the United Nations development system, merging development with peace and human rights and thereby reducing the accountability of the system to Member States. While he fully respected the right of the delegation to make that interpretation, as one of the authors of the report he argued that such a reading ran counter to the original aim of the text. The proposed reforms were not intended to centralize or politicize the development system. When describing new functions for the Deputy Secretary-General, the report was merely fulfilling a request contained in a General Assembly resolution in which it had been observed that the development system had no effective means of reporting to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Hence, the objective was to strengthen, not to weaken, the capacity of the system to respond to both bodies. Indeed, the Council would be at the centre of the new accountability mechanism. The need for an evaluation function was precisely so that Member States had a much more accurate analysis of successes and failures than from what was traditionally presented in the generally positive reports of the various entities of the United Nations system.

117. Similarly, resident coordinators had no political function: they coordinated the different aspects of country teams in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals while leaving a clear line of accountability between each agency and its board. Such a reform would not reduce but in fact increase accountability to Member States and was in keeping with what Member States themselves had repeatedly demanded: a clear vision of what country teams and agencies were doing. Traditionally, each agency had gone its own way, operating according to the priorities defined by its donors rather than by Governments. It was necessary to create coordination mechanisms for agencies to respond to national plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Currently, a much more politicized situation occurred, where agencies spent 85 to 90 per cent of their funds on their own priorities, which were not necessarily those of the States involved.

118. He stood ready to establish all the necessary mechanisms to clarify accountability to Member States as well as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Russian Federation should rest assured that its concerns had been taken into consideration and that there was no intention of sacrificing development to peace or human rights. However, the best form of prevention was sustainable and inclusive development. Funds would not be transferred to other objectives such as security; rather, it was important to recognize the centrality of development to all pillars of activity. He hoped that consensus could be found in that regard.

119. The delegation of Canada had raised three important issues that would need to be further clarified during the debates. He was also grateful to the delegation of the United States of America for its emphasis on the need to respect results and outcomes as the central criteria when examining the activities of the development system.

120. Responding to the delegation of China, he reiterated that a central tenet of the reform was ensuring that the necessary conditions existed for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. He agreed that priority should be given to developing countries while respecting national ownership and that South-South cooperation complemented but must not replace traditional official development assistance commitments. He looked forward to the United Nations being more effective in supporting the very important contribution made by China to South-South cooperation.

121. He agreed with the delegation of Colombia regarding the issue of overlap. Much work remained to be done so that coordination could transform overlaps

into synergies. Development was a precondition for peace.

122. Much as the delegation of Singapore had observed, it was important to prioritize small island developing States and to leave no Goals behind.

123. The delegation of Jordan had presented its testimony of a country that had faced the dramatic impact of refugees, accompanied by enormous humanitarian problems and negative effects on its structural development. Jordan was proof of the fact that a nexus was needed between humanitarian action and development efforts; that nexus must nonetheless respect the autonomy of the humanitarian space. Such integrated missions in fact already existed in some countries where peacekeeping missions had been established. However, when situations like the one in Jordan occurred, it was necessary to ensure that the international community not only responded to the humanitarian needs of refugees, but also to the structural development problems that were created in the host country as a result of its generosity in hosting refugees. Such responses should also use innovative sources of funding as stipulated in the change of policy adopted by the World Bank in that regard. He also agreed that communication was crucial to the work of the United Nations development system.

124. Responding to the delegation of Thailand, he confirmed that resident coordinators were supposed to work in close consultation with Member States.

125. He was grateful to the delegation of Ecuador for its kind words regarding the vision contained in the report, and also for its suggestions on further clarifications. Responding to the request for statistics on inequality, he pointed out that the eight richest individuals in the world possessed half of the entire world's wealth.

126. The issue of human trafficking raised by the delegation of Hungary was the most hideous crime and an issue that was dear to his heart. At least the same capacity and resources should be devoted to fighting it as were dedicated to combating drug trafficking.

127. Lastly, expressing his gratitude to delegation of the European Union for its constructive comments, he said that he would count on its support for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.